Interviewing With Confidence

CSU East Bay, Academic Advising and Career Education: Connecting Curriculum and Career

Put forth your most confident, capable and polished self during your interview. Here are five tips to help ensure that your air of self-confidence won’t cross the line into arrogance.

**Talk Teamwork**

Avoid overstating your role in team projects. Be clear about what the team accomplished and about your role. An effective person on a successful team is the best of all possible worlds.

**Engage Everyone**

Show the ability to engage and manage a diverse group of people, including those in the ranks below you. It indicates you can get things done in an organization. Your social interactions through the interview process will be observed. Casual conversation while being escorted from an interview demonstrates your social skills and your enthusiasm about the company.

**Convey Interest with Questions**

Knowing little about a company suggests you thought you didn't need to bother. Asking detailed, pointed questions about the company is a good way to show that you've done your homework. The questions will also demonstrate if you know nothing about a company. Don’t ask questions that are easily answered by looking at the company's web site. Asking questions about the company's culture indicates that you're looking for the job that will fit you best, rather than one that will provide the most prestige or biggest paycheck.

**Don’t Fixate on Your Job Title**

Chances are that your job is going to change after you join a company. Your supervisor will move on, the job will grow or shrink, or you’ll be promoted quickly because you’re a great talent. As a result, be most concerned with how you will fit with the firm in general rather than your initial title or exact role.

**Have Realistic Expectations**

Employers who recruit college grads and MBAs want people who see themselves at the beginning of their career. The job isn't necessarily going to be at the bottom, but there is room to develop before you manage. Grads and MBAs who believe they'll immediately get to use the management skills they learned in class to run a big-business division need to adjust their expectations. This is particularly important when changing careers, and especially if you're also changing industries. Just because you were a manager in engineering doesn't mean you're ready to be put in charge of another department immediately.

Spend time talking to alumni about their career paths to gain a realistic idea of what your first job after graduation might be and where you might go from there.

*This document is available in alternative formats (large print, Braille, audio tape, etc.). Please contact the AACE to submit your request.*